

BOSTON UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

LIBRARY

Ed.

Service Paper
Hennessey, G.P.

The Gift of ..Geraldine P. Hennessey. 1949.....

stored

Ed
Service Paper
Hennessey, G.P.
1949
stored

BOSTON UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Service Paper

THE ANALYSIS OF SOME COMPREHENSION PROBLEMS
OF KINDERGARTEN CHILDREN

Submitted by

Geraldine Paula Hennessey

(B. S. in Ed., Boston Teachers College, 1932)

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree of Master of Education

1949

Boston University
School of Education
Library

School of Education

October 22 1949

31732

First Reader: Helen A. Murphy, Associate Professor of Education

Second Reader: Donald D. Durrell, Professor of Education

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The writer wishes to express her appreciation to Dr. Helen A. Murphy of the School of Education, Boston University, for invaluable guidance in the preparation of this study.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER	PAGE
I SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS RESEARCH	1
II PLAN OF STUDY	8
III ANALYSIS OF DATA	13
IV SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS	28
BIBLIOGRAPHY	32
APPENDIX	36
Sample Record	37

INTRODUCTION

Vocabulary is important in reading. The kindergarten child must be given every opportunity to develop adequate word understanding before he is exposed to the complex problems of reading.

Much emphasis has been placed on the developmental angle of the vocabulary of the pre-school child, and numerous studies have been made to compile lists of the specific vocabularies of children of nursery school and kindergarten age.

An analysis of the vocabularies of young children to determine the degree of understanding of words alike in sound but different in meaning which the child may encounter in beginning reading, would appear to be of value, as every teacher of young children is aware that no introduction of symbols and letters can be successful, if the child is hindered by limited concepts in vocabulary.

The impetus for this study was an incident of the meaning of the word "bank" which arose during the telling of the story of "Flip" to the forty kindergarten children subsequently included in this investigation.

The story relates how Flip "always landed in the water instead of on the opposite bank." One of the children asked "Where is the bank in the picture?" This brought forth the

idea that the child was looking for the First National Bank, and thus was developed our interest in words that sound alike but have different meanings.

The purpose of this study is to discover the knowledge forty kindergarten children have of the meanings of thirty-six words which occur in the Boston University Educational Clinic Primary Word List. Each word included in the list has several meanings, and this study is an attempt to find which ones the children know.

CHAPTER I

SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS RESEARCH

Oral language is important in the kindergarten. It is necessary that the words the child hears convey specific meanings to him.

Many studies have been made of the vocabularies of young children to discover what words they use. There are several of such lists which are valuable to teachers.

In a discussion of the necessity of stressing relationship between meaning and words, Storm¹ reports, "The problem of developing children's vocabularies and concepts challenges the attention of every teacher in the primary grades." She warns against teachers assuming a meaning as understood by the whole group because a few of the children show interest and enthusiasm. She gives as an example of words which have different meanings, blow "to move the air," and blow "a sudden stroke with the hand or a weapon," and relates the following misunderstanding of the sentence - "As the man went through a door, he received a blow on the back." When the child was asked "What happened to the man?" he replied "He was blown through the door."

1. Storm, Grace E., "Developing Meaningful Concepts in Reading," Supplementary Education Monographs, Recent Trends in Reading, William S. Gray, editor, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1939, p. 59.

McKee¹ offers suggestions relative to the development of meaning vocabulary at the pre-school period. He states that the child must be provided with an opportunity to acquire accurate concepts that will later serve as the source of meaning in reading, and that there must be ample opportunity for the child to become familiar with the common sound symbols of these concepts.

Dolch² asked "How much word knowledge do children bring to Grade I?" He states that since the fundamental characteristic of word meaning is continued growth from the first vague familiarity to a full and exact concept, we must adhere to three principles for measuring word understanding of the child entering school. He lists these principles - 1) word knowledge rather than word usage, 2) survey of vocabulary rather than sampling, 3) specific degree of meaning. In a further analysis of the stated principles, Dolch sets forth that we must discover what words the child knows rather than what words he uses. He contends it is not safe to reason from a sample to a whole, and cites as an example that because a child may know what a mailman does, we cannot reason he knows what the policeman does.

1. McKee, Paul, "Vocabulary Development", Thirty-sixth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part 1, Bloomington, Illinois: Public School Publishing Company, 1937, p. 279.

2. Dolch, E. W., "How Much Word Knowledge Do Children Bring to Grade I?" Elementary English Review, 13: 177-178, May, 1936.

"It seems to have been assumed, " Chambers¹ wrote in 1904, "when a child began to use a certain word that in some mysterious fashion the full meaning of the word was appreciated, that the symbol carried its own content with it." He states that when a child used a certain word, the adult read into that word the full meaning gained from his own abundant concepts, and gave the child credit for much greater word understanding than he really possessed.

McKee² stresses the need of many concepts when he states "With rich concepts, full comprehension can be secured: with partial or vague concepts only partial or vague meaning can be attained. Correct concepts make correct comprehension a possibility: false concepts can produce only misunderstanding."

Chambers³ emphasizes that often the meaning of a word depends on a simple incident "sometimes only distantly related to the essential content." He gives the following example of the effect of emphasis on one meaning of a word. A little girl shook her pet rabbit and exclaimed, "five times five." When asked why she was doing it she answered "Papa said rabbits multiply rapidly and Bunny won't do it."

1. Chambers, Will Grant, "How Words Get Meaning," Pedagogical Seminary, 11: 31; March 1904.

2. McKee, op. cit., p. 278.

3. Chambers, op. cit., p. 49.

The first part of the paper discusses the importance of the study of the history of the English language. It is argued that the study of the history of the English language is not only a matter of academic interest but also of practical importance. The paper then goes on to discuss the various factors which have influenced the development of the English language over the centuries. These factors include the influence of other languages, the influence of social and cultural changes, and the influence of technological advances. The paper concludes by stating that the study of the history of the English language is a fascinating and important field of study.

The second part of the paper discusses the importance of the study of the history of the English language. It is argued that the study of the history of the English language is not only a matter of academic interest but also of practical importance. The paper then goes on to discuss the various factors which have influenced the development of the English language over the centuries. These factors include the influence of other languages, the influence of social and cultural changes, and the influence of technological advances. The paper concludes by stating that the study of the history of the English language is a fascinating and important field of study.

The third part of the paper discusses the importance of the study of the history of the English language. It is argued that the study of the history of the English language is not only a matter of academic interest but also of practical importance. The paper then goes on to discuss the various factors which have influenced the development of the English language over the centuries. These factors include the influence of other languages, the influence of social and cultural changes, and the influence of technological advances. The paper concludes by stating that the study of the history of the English language is a fascinating and important field of study.

Also concurring in the teacher's obligation in the matter of word understanding is the report of Gray and Holmes¹ who state that the teachers face a major obligation in broadening the experience of pupils and enriching and clarifying word meanings.

Developing the same idea of the use of experiences as the most potent procedure in establishing a meaning vocabulary, McKee² lists innumerable activities that would broaden the child's experiential background, such as dramatizations, excursions, constructive activities, and the like.

In a discussion of the relation of reading to learning, Gray³ lists many ways in which children gain broader meanings and new information. He includes varied activities that stimulate thinking and provide motives for learning, such as the radio, moving pictures, museums and libraries. These may all aid in extending the child's experiences.

In a study of abstract versus realistic thinking, McKee⁴ states, "Recent evidence shows that verbalism - mere word

1. Gray, William S., and Holmes, Eleanor, The Development of Meaning Vocabularies in Reading, Publication of the Laboratory Schools of the University of Chicago, No. 6, Chicago: The University of Chicago, 1938, p. 93.

2. McKee, op. cit., p. 277.

3. Gray, William S., "The Nature and Types of Reading," Thirty-sixth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part I, Bloomington, Illinois: Public School Publishing Company, 1937, p. 23.

4. McKee, op. cit., p. 279.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

DEPARTMENT OF CHEMISTRY

PHYSICAL CHEMISTRY

LECTURE NOTES

BY

PROFESSOR

JOHN

DOUGLAS

CHICAGO

ILLINOIS

U.S.A.

1960

1961

1962

1963

1964

1965

1966

1967

1968

1969

1970

1971

1972

1973

1974

1975

1976

1977

recognition and word reproduction - is prevalent in much of the reading that goes on in school." He lists two fundamental principles necessary for a clear understanding of the importance of the development of meaning vocabulary, and of training in word recognition. The first principle is that since concepts are the source of meaning in reading, and the success or failure in reading is determined by the richness and accuracy of the child's concepts, the fundamental task in the development of a meaning vocabulary is the establishment of many accurate concepts in the child's mind. The second principle is that word recognition, while an essential skill in the reading process, is important only when closely associated with the realization of meaning.

In a discussion of the meaning and application of the semantic approach, Diederich¹ warns of the same dangers and says that our pupils do not understand what they hear or read, and that often they do not know what they mean by what they say or write.

Developing the same point, Douglass and Spitzer² state "verbalism has been encouraged by the separation of schooling

1. Diederich, Paul B., "The Semantic Approach: Its Meaning and Application," Supplementary Education Monographs, Recent Trends in Reading, William S. Gray, editor, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1939, p. 16.

2. Douglass, Harl R., and Spitzer, Herbert F., "The Importance of Teaching for Understanding," Forty-fifth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part 1, Bloomington, Illinois: Public School Publishing Company, 1946, p. 11.

from the ordinary activities of life." They list seven reasons for the acceptance of glib verbalism and mechanical skills in the place of meaningful learning as follows:

1. The prevailing psychology of learning with its emphasis upon isolated units or items rather than upon wholes and relationships.

2. The rather general dependence upon textbooks which frequently are little more than compendia of detailed facts and of generalized summaries.

3. Overconfidence in teaching by telling, and in learning by memorizing what has been heard or read.

4. The rapidly expanding content of the curriculum, which encouraged teachers to attempt the impossible.

5. The poor quality of teacher preparation and the limited experiential backgrounds of teachers.

6. The wasteful practice of individual recitations as contrasted with cooperative group activity.

7. The tendency to make of schooling an artificial thing by divorcing it from the activities of ordinary life.

McKee¹ suggests that the kindergarten should stimulate the development of meaning and offer opportunity for simple informal discussion, story-telling, and oral reading.

The need for word understanding is dictated by the child's own interest and needs and as such is functional at

1. McKee, op. cit. p. 280.

6

this level. Crosscup¹ states that "the teaching of word meanings cannot be considered apart from the class situation as a whole, that is, apart from the kind of classroom situation in which words and their concepts are to be used as the tools of learning."

Kibbe² sums up the problem of words that sound alike but have different meanings thusly: "If in our language only one meaning were allowed to each word, we might gain much satisfaction in checking off the words which were taught to pupils. Since, however, most words have multiple meanings, it is necessary to watch in our teaching for the new meanings as they occur."

This research shows the importance of word meaning. The purpose of this study is to analyze the degree of understanding a group of kindergarten children have of thirty-six words which may be encountered in beginning reading.

1. Crosscup, Richard B., "A Survey and Analysis of Methods and Techniques for Fostering Growth of Meaning Vocabulary," Unpublished Master's Thesis, Boston University, 1940, p. 64.

2. Kibbe, Delia E., "Enlarging and Enriching Meaning Vocabularies in Reading," Supplementary Education Monographs, Recent Trends in Reading, William S. Gray, editor, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1939, p. 70.

CHAPTER II

PLAN OF STUDY

This study is an attempt to analyze the comprehension difficulties of thirty-six words selected from the Boston University Educational Clinic Primary Word List. The words included in the study have many meanings, and it is the purpose of this investigation to find out which meanings the children have for the word.

The study was conducted in a public school kindergarten of a large city, the school itself being located in a section adjoining the city proper. The parents of the children belong in the middle socio-economic group.

A total of forty children were included. The children are admitted to kindergarten in September if they have attained the chronological age of four years and six months. The average chronological age at the time of the test was five years and four months.

Twenty children attended the morning session and the other twenty children were present for the afternoon session. Twenty-two boys and eighteen girls were in the groups.

The Primary Word List of the Boston University Educational Clinic was examined for words which might cause a problem because of similar sound with another word as bee.

A total of forty-six words were selected. The list follows:

Pre primer I

here

see

to

Pre primer II

.be

duck

can

we

Book I

blue

buy

by

feet

fine

new

one

red

saw

their

too

two

way

would

Primer

dear

know

no

may

read

there

Book II

bears

beat

bowl

flour

pair

stile

wee

Supplementary

ball

bee

bill

blew

corn

deer

fall

flat

fly

tail

well

cellar

Some of the words selected for study appeared in more than one form. The following is a list of such words:

be
bee

blew
blue

buy
by

dear
deer

know
no

read
red

their
there

to
too
two

we
wee

This meant that a total of thirty-six words were presented in the oral test.

An individual oral technique was used to determine the understanding of the words. Each child had two conference periods of approximately fifteen minutes each. Eighteen words were tested in each period.

The child and the teacher were seated at a low table, a sufficient distance away from the other children to be free from distraction.

The teacher had an individual record sheet for each child with the words listed in alphabetical order. Each child's sheet was identified by a number which corresponded to his alphabetical name listing. His chronological age was also listed at the top of the sheet. A copy of the list is included in the Appendix.

The word "bank" was used as an example at the beginning of the conference. The teacher recalled the story of Flip and the two meanings of the word "bank" and definitely established that the child being tested understood the example given.

The first word on the list under study - ball - was then presented to the child in the following way. "Sometimes the word "ball" means different things. Tell me everything you know it means."

A record of the oral responses which the word called forth was written down by the teacher. The child was allowed an opportunity to give all of the meanings he knew without

The following is a list of the names of the persons who have been
admitted to the office of the Secretary of the Board of Education
since the last meeting of the Board. The names are given in the
order in which they were admitted, and are followed by the date
of admission. The names are given in the order in which they were
admitted, and are followed by the date of admission. The names are
given in the order in which they were admitted, and are followed by
the date of admission. The names are given in the order in which
they were admitted, and are followed by the date of admission.

pressure of time. If he gave two meanings in his oral response, he was congratulated and reminded that he had given two meanings, as "bank" in the story of Flip, and the First National Bank.

If only one meaning was given, he was asked for a different kind of "tail" or "flour", etc., and if no answer was given, the next word was immediately presented.

The responses were analyzed and the results are presented in the next chapter.

CHAPTER III

ANALYSIS OF DATA

Forty children in a kindergarten were presented thirty-six words orally to test the extent of meaning of the word.

The results were analyzed to show:

1. Correct responses.
2. Incorrect responses.
3. Order of difficulty of the words.

Table I shows the total number and per cent of responses.

THE

AMERICAN

REVIEW

OF

THE

ART

AND

THE

REVIEW

TABLE I

TOTAL NUMBER AND PER CENT OF RESPONSES

Word	CORRECT RESPONSE		INCORRECT RESPONSE		NO RESPONSE	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
ball	40	100.	0	0	0	0
bawl	3	7.5	0	0	37	92.5
be	13	32.5	11	27.5	16	40.
bee	33	82.5	0	0	7	17.5
bears	39	97.5	0	0	1	2.5
bares	8	20.	2	5	30	75.
beat	24	60.	2	5	14	35.
beet	35	87.5	1	2.5	4	10.
bill	34	85.	0	0	6	15.
bill	24	60.	1	2.5	15	37.5
blew	31	77.5	0	0	9	22.5
blue	39	97.5	0	0	1	2.5
bowl	37	92.5	0	0	3	7.5
bowl	16	40.	0	0	24	60.
buy	35	87.5	0	0	5	12.5
by	26	65.	1	2.5	13	32.5
can	9	22.5	0	0	31	77.5
can	40	100.	0	0	0	0
cellar	20	50.	7	17.5	13	32.5
seller	2	5.	0	0	38	95.

TABLE I (continued)

TOTAL NUMBER AND PER CENT OF RESPONSES

Word	CORRECT RESPONSE		INCORRECT RESPONSE		NO RESPONSE	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
corn	40	100.	0	0	0	0
corn	4	10.	0	0	36	90.
dear	33	82.5	0	0	7	17.5
deer	38	95.	0	0	2	5.
duck	37	92.5	1	2.5	2	5.
duck	11	27.5	0	0	29	72.5
fall	35	87.5	0	0	5	12.5
fall	20	50.	1	2.5	19	47.5
feet	38	95.	2	5.	0	0
feat	0	0	0	0	40	100.
fine	28	70.	6	15.	6	15.
fine	0	0	0	0	40	100.
flat	34	85.	1	2.5	5	12.5
flat	0	0	0	0	40	100.
flour	9	22.5	0	0	31	77.5
flower	35	87.5	0	0	5	12.5
fly	28	70.	0	0	12	30.
fly	27	67.5	0	0	13	32.5
here	17	42.5	0	0	23	57.5
hear	28	70.	0	0	12	30.

TABLE I (continued)

TOTAL NUMBER AND PER CENT OF RESPONSES

Word	CORRECT RESPONSE		INCORRECT RESPONSE		NO RESPONSE	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
know	15	37.5	0	0	25	62.5
no	37	92.5	0	0	3	7.5
may	26	65.	0	0	14	35.
May	22	55.	1	2.5	17	42.5
new	35	87.5	0	0	5	12.5
knew	7	17.5	0	0	33	82.5
one	32	80.	4	10.	4	10.
won	19	47.5	1	2.5	20	50.
pair	22	55.	0	0	18	45.
pear	37	92.5	0	0	3	7.5
pare	5	12.5	0	0	35	87.5
read	13	32.5	0	0	27	67.5
red	39	97.5	0	0	1	2.5
saw	14	35.	0	0	26	65.
saw	38	95.	0	0	2	5.
see	22	55.	7	17.5	11	27.5
sea	28	70.	0	0	12	30.
stile	1	2.5	5	12.5	34	85.
style	21	52.5	0	0	19	47.5

TABLE I (continued)

TOTAL NUMBER AND PER CENT OF RESPONSES

Word	CORRECT RESPONSE		INCORRECT RESPONSE		NO RESPONSE	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
tail	38	95.	0	0	2	5
tale	16	40.	1	2.5	23	57.5
their	3	7.5	2	5.	35	87.5
there	27	67.5	1	2.5	12	30.
to	22	55.	0	0	18	45.
too	0	0	0	0	40	100.
two	37	92.5	2	5.	1	2.5
way	32	80.	0	0	8	20.
weigh	19	47.5	1	2.5	20	50.
we	27	67.5	0	0	13	32.5
wee	15	37.5	2	0	23	57.5
well	17	42.5	3	7.5	20	50.
well	28	70.	5	12.5	7	17.5
would	7	17.5	1	2.5	32	80.
wood	38	95.	1	2.5	1	2.5

An analysis of the specific responses seemed to be important because they evidenced the effect of environment. One hundred per cent of the children knew the meaning of the word - ball. The responses they gave were definitely influenced by their environment of a busy city neighborhood adjacent to a ball park.

<u>Child No.</u>	<u>Word</u>	<u>Responses</u>
9	ball	"You roll a ball and you lose it because a truck may run over it."
16	ball	"If it goes out on the street you don't run after it."
28	ball	"Play ball! That's what they say at the ball game."
39	ball	"When it rolls out on the street you musn't run out to get it."

The influence of environment which precludes the word - cellar - and substitutes the word - basement - is apparent also in the analysis of responses to the word - cellar.

Twenty children gave correct responses.

Thirteen children gave no answer.

Seven children gave incorrect answers.

The following are samplings:

<u>Child No.</u>	<u>Word</u>	<u>Responses</u>
3	cellar	"Cellophane to cover books."
4	cellar	"You celebrate a party."
22	cellar	"You celebrate New Year's."
23	cellar	"Cellophane."

Some findings seemed to warrant individual analysis and the following samplings are recorded:

An examination of Table I shows that the word - fine - was given incorrect responses by 15% of the total number of children tested. Upon study of individual answers involved, this indicated that the incorrect responses were due to poor auditory discrimination, the child giving a response for - find - instead of for - fine. For example, when presented with the word - fine - the following comments were made.

<u>Child No.</u>	<u>Word</u>	<u>Responses</u>
2	fine	"You fine a penny you can keep it and spend it."
14	fine	"Paul found a ball and he gave it to me."
20	fine	"My mother says fine the mittens you lost."
24	fine	"You fine stuff and you give it to your mother."
29	fine	"Findies keepies."
39	fine	"I fine something on the street."

Other examples of poor auditory discrimination are as follows:

13	stile	"When you walk up the church to get married." (The child confused stile with aisle.)
20	weigh	"You get on a whale and weigh yourself." (The child used the word whale when scale was meant.)

The first part of the paper discusses the importance of the study and the objectives of the research. It also outlines the methodology used in the study and the results obtained. The second part of the paper discusses the implications of the study and the conclusions drawn from the research. The third part of the paper discusses the limitations of the study and the areas for future research.

The study was conducted in a laboratory setting and involved the use of a series of tests to measure the performance of the system. The results of the tests were compared to the theoretical predictions and the conclusions drawn from the study. The study found that the system performed well under the conditions tested and that the theoretical predictions were generally accurate.

The implications of the study are that the system can be used in a variety of applications and that the results of the study can be used to inform the design of future systems. The conclusions drawn from the study are that the system is a viable option for the applications studied and that the theoretical predictions are a good guide to the system's performance.

The limitations of the study are that the results were obtained from a laboratory setting and that the system was tested under ideal conditions. The areas for future research are to test the system under more realistic conditions and to investigate the effects of different parameters on the system's performance.

It is interesting to note that several children who were unable to give the meaning, gave a similar sounding word; for example:

<u>Child No.</u>	<u>Word</u>	<u>Responses</u>
30	bares	"I don't know what it means but it sounds like pears."
35	stile	"It sounds something like dial."

Table II shows the words arranged in order of difficulty based on percentage of correct responses.

TABLE II

ORDER OF DIFFICULTY OF WORDS BASED ON NUMBER
AND PER CENT OF CORRECT RESPONSES

WORD	MEANING	NO. CORRECT	PER CENT CORRECT
ball	A round object	40	100
can	A container	40	100
corn	A vegetable	40	100
bears	Animals	39	97.5
blue	Color	39	97.5
red	Color	39	97.5
deer	Animal	38	95.
feet	Part of body	38	95.
tail	Part of animal	38	95.
saw	Tool	38	95.
wood	Fibrous substance of trees	38	95.
bowl	A deep round dish	37	92.5
duck	Flat billed swimming bird	37	92.5
no	Opposite of yes	37	92.5
pear	A fruit	37	92.5
two	Number	37	92.5
beet	A vegetable	35	87.5
buy	To purchase	35	87.5
fall	To drop downward	35	87.5
flower	Grows on a plant	35	87.5
new	Recently acquired	35	87.5
bill	Part of a bird	34	85.
flat	Having a smooth surface and level	34	85.
bee	Insect	33	82.5
dear	A term of affection	33	82.5
one	A number	32	80.
way	Direction	32	80.
blew	To blow (past tense)	31	77.5
fine	Excellent	28	70.
fly	To move through air	28	70.
hear	To perceive by ear	28	70.
sea	Body of water	28	70.
well	A hole in earth for water	28	70.
fly	Insect	27	67.5
there	In or at that place	27	67.5
we	Myself and others	27	67.5
by	Near	26	65.
may	To be able	26	65.
beat	To overcome in a game	24	60.

TABLE II (continued)

ORDER OF DIFFICULTY OF WORDS BASED ON NUMBER
AND PER CENT OF CORRECT RESPONSES

WORD	MEANING	NO. CORRECT	PER CENT CORRECT
bill	Money	24	60.
may	Month	22	55.
pair	Two of a kind	22	55.
see	To behold	22	55.
to	Denotes relation of approach	22	55.
style	Mode or manner	21	52.5
cellar	Basement	20	50.
fall	Season	20	50.
weigh	To measure weight	19	47.5
won	To do better than any one else	19	47.5
here	In this place	17	42.5
well	Favorably	17	42.5
bowl	A game	16	40.
tale	Story	16	40.
know	Recognize	15	37.5
wee	Very small	15	37.5
saw	Past tense of see	14	35.
be	To exist	13	32.5
read	Past of read	13	32.5
duck	To plunge under water	11	27.5
can	Ability to accomplish	9	22.5
flour	Ground meal of grain	9	22.5
bare	To make bare	8	20.
knew	Past of know	7	17.5
would	P.P. of will	5	12.5
pare	To cut	5	12.5
corn	A thickening of skin on toes	4	10.
bawl	To cry out	3	7.5
their	Belonging to	3	7.5
seller	One who sells	2	5.
stile	A fence	1	2.5
feat	An unusual deed	0	0
fine	Punishment for wrong doing	0	0
flat	Apartment	0	0
too	Also	0	0

As indicated in Table II, there was complete understanding of three of the words tested - ball, can, corn. The meaning of two of these words - ball, - corn (vegetable), was the meaning which would be necessary for understanding in beginning reading. The third word which showed complete understanding was can (a container). This is not the understanding of the word necessary for reading. That meaning - can - (the ability to accomplish) was given by only nine children.

This limited concept of - can - as it may be encountered in beginning reading, shows need for enlarging and enriching the word in this sense to avoid comprehension difficulties at first grade level.

Table III shows the words with fifty per cent or less understanding of the meaning as it may be encountered in beginning reading.

TABLE III

WORDS FROM LIST SHOWING 50% OR LESS UNDERSTANDING OF THE
MEANING OF THE WORD AS IT MAY BE ENCOUNTERED IN
BEGINNING READING

Word	Number Correct	Per Cent Correct
be	13	32.5
can (to accomplish)	9	22.5
cellar	20	50.
flour	9	22.8
here	17	42.5
know	15	37.5
read	13	32.5
saw (past of see)	14	35.
stile	1	2.5
their	3	7.5
too	0	0.
wee	15	37.5
well (favorably)	17	42.5
would	7	17.5

CHAPTER IV

THE HISTORY OF THE

REPUBLIC OF THE UNITED STATES

CHAPTER IV	
THE HISTORY OF THE	
REPUBLIC OF THE UNITED STATES	
1	1776
2	1777
3	1778
4	1779
5	1780
6	1781
7	1782
8	1783
9	1784
10	1785
11	1786
12	1787
13	1788
14	1789
15	1790
16	1791
17	1792
18	1793
19	1794
20	1795
21	1796
22	1797
23	1798
24	1799
25	1800
26	1801
27	1802
28	1803
29	1804
30	1805
31	1806
32	1807
33	1808
34	1809
35	1810
36	1811
37	1812
38	1813
39	1814
40	1815
41	1816
42	1817
43	1818
44	1819
45	1820
46	1821
47	1822
48	1823
49	1824
50	1825
51	1826
52	1827
53	1828
54	1829
55	1830
56	1831
57	1832
58	1833
59	1834
60	1835
61	1836
62	1837
63	1838
64	1839
65	1840
66	1841
67	1842
68	1843
69	1844
70	1845
71	1846
72	1847
73	1848
74	1849
75	1850
76	1851
77	1852
78	1853
79	1854
80	1855
81	1856
82	1857
83	1858
84	1859
85	1860
86	1861
87	1862
88	1863
89	1864
90	1865
91	1866
92	1867
93	1868
94	1869
95	1870
96	1871
97	1872
98	1873
99	1874
100	1875

The fourteen words listed in Table III indicate limited concepts of words in the meaning necessary for beginning reading.

There is a definite need for enriching and enlarging the concepts of these words in order to aid in a successful approach to reading.

Table IV shows a comparison of meaning. The words listed showed a meager understanding of the word in the necessary meaning, and greater knowledge of the word in another meaning.

TABLE IV

COMPARISON OF MEAGER UNDERSTANDING OF WORD IN FIRST
GRADE MEANING AND GREATER UNDERSTANDING OF
WORD IN ANOTHER MEANING

1st grade word meaning	number correct	per cent correct	other meaning	number correct	per cent correct
beat	24	60.	beet	35	87.5
can (ability to accomplish	9	22.5	can (con- tainer	40	100.
flour	9	22.5	flower	35	87.5
here	17	42.5	hear	28	70.
pair	22	55.	pear	37	92.5
saw (past tense of see)	14	35.	saw (a tool)	38	95.
see	22	55.	sea	28	70.
stile	1	2.5	style	21	52.5
well (favorably)	17	42.5	well (hole in earth for water	28	70.
would	7	17.5	wood	3.8	95.

It is interesting to note that only one child knew - stile - while twenty-one children gave the word in its other meaning - style. It may be further noted that - flour - was known by only nine children, while - flower - was given correctly by thirty-five children.

The fact that the child has a rich concept of another meaning of the word while he has only a partial concept of the word in the meaning he will encounter in beginning reading, indicates the need for wider experiences to clarify and enrich the meaning which will be necessary for a successful approach to reading.

These findings would be of value to a kindergarten teacher in planning exercises to overcome the limited concepts of vocabulary as shown by this investigation.

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

It was the purpose of this study to determine the comprehension difficulties for kindergarten children of thirty-six words selected from the Boston University Educational Clinic Primary Word List. The words included in the study had many meanings and it was the purpose of this investigation to find which meanings the children knew.

The words were presented orally to forty kindergarten children.

The data was analyzed.

As a result of this investigation, the following conclusions may be drawn:

1. The thirty-six words had many meanings.
2. The effects of environment were evidenced by specific responses in the findings of the following words:
 - a. ball
 - b. cellar
3. Scattered cases of poor auditory perception were noted.
4. There was full comprehension of three words:
 - a. ball
 - b. can (container)
 - c. corn (vegetable)

5. As indicated in Table III, fourteen of the words showed fifty per cent or less understanding of the meaning necessary for beginning reading. They were:

be	32.5%
can (ability to accomplish)	22.5%
cellar	50. %
flour	22.5%
here	42.5%
know	37.5%
read	32.5%
saw (past tense of see)	35. %
stile	2.5%
there	7.5%
too	0.
wee	37.5%
well (favorably)	42.5%
would	17.5%

These low percentages indicate the need for providing special enrichment for these words.

6. Ten of the words tested showed a meager understanding of the word in the meaning encountered in first grade reading books, but had a greater understanding of the word in another meaning.

These words as indicated in Table IV are:

1st grade word meaning		Other meaning	
beat	60%	beet	87.5%
can (accomplish)	22.5%	can (container)	100.%
flour	22.5%	flower	87.5%
here	42.5%	hear	70.%
pair	55. %	pear	92.5%
saw (past of see)	35. %	saw (tool)	95. %
see	55. %	sea	70. %
stile	2.5%	style	52.5%
well (favorably)	42.5%	well (for water)	70. %
would	17.5%	wood	95. %

The fact that the child has a rich concept of the word in another of its meanings, while he has only a partial understanding of the word in the meaning he will encounter in beginning reading, indicates the need for wider experiences to clarify and enrich the meaning which will be necessary for a correct approach to reading.

7. The inadequacies of the children's responses may be due in part to the difficult bridge between the verbal symbol and word understanding.

8. The presentation of a word in isolation rather than in context may have hindered the child's response as no stimulus was provided to enable him to recall a familiar concept and thus derive meaning.

Name	Age	Sex
John Smith	25	Male
Mary Jones	30	Female
Robert Brown	22	Male
Elizabeth White	28	Female
James Green	20	Male
Sarah Black	24	Female
Thomas Grey	21	Male

These are the names of the people who were present at the meeting on the 1st of January 1880.

The meeting was held in the hall of the school and was attended by about 20 people.

The first business of the meeting was to elect a committee to look after the school.

The committee was elected and consisted of the following members:

Mr. John Smith, Mr. Robert Brown, Mr. Thomas Grey, Mr. James Green, Mr. William Black.

The committee then proceeded to discuss the state of the school and the need for a new building.

It was decided that a new building should be erected and that the committee should raise the money for it.

IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHING AND FURTHER RESEARCH

It is recommended that:

1. The teacher should be cognizant of the difficulties which beset the child in the field of word meaning and should guide and clarify the concepts developing at the kindergarten level.
2. A study be made involving the same words on the basis of abstract and concrete words as they affect the findings of this investigation.
3. A study be made involving the correlation between parts of speech and meaning content as evidenced by this study.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Chambers, Will Grant, "How Words Get Meaning," Pedagogical Seminary, 11: 30-50; March, 1904.
- Crosscup, Richard B., "A Survey and Analysis of Methods and Techniques for Fostering Growth of Meaning Vocabulary," Unpublished Master's Thesis, Boston University, 1940.
- Dale, Edgar, "Relation Between Reading and Other Aids to Learning," Supplementary Educational Monographs, Recent Trends in Reading, William S. Gray, editor, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1939. pp. 207-216.
- Diederich, Paul B., "The Semantic Approach: Its Meaning and Application," Supplementary Education Monographs, Recent Trends in Reading, William S. Gray, editor, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1939, pp. 16-25.
- Dolch, E. W., "How Much Word Knowledge Do Children Bring to Grade I?", Elementary English Review, 13: 177-183; May 1936.
- Douglass, Harl R., and Spitzer, Herbert F., "The Importance of Teaching for Understanding," Forty-fifth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part I, Bloomington, Illinois: Public School Publishing Company, 1946, pp. 7-26.
- Durrell, Donald D., "A Vocabulary for Corrective Reading," Elementary English Review, 11: 106-109; April, 1934.
- Enright, Elizabeth L., "The Analysis of Kindergarten Children's Speaking Vocabulary in Relation to First Grade Reading." Unpublished Master's Thesis, Boston University, 1943.
- Goodykoontz, Bess, "The Relation of Pictures to Reading Comprehension," Elementary English Review, 13: 125-130; April, 1936.
- Gray, William S., "The Nature and Types of Reading," Thirty-sixth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part I, Bloomington, Illinois: Public School Publishing Company, 1937, pp. 23-38.

- Gray, William S., and Holmes, Eleanor, The Development of Meaning Vocabularies in Reading, Publication of the Laboratory Schools of the University of Chicago: No. 6, 1938, 140 pp.
- Gunderson, A. G., "The Young Child and Word Meanings," Elementary English Review, 19: 51-54, February, 1942.
- Hay, Cora G., "A Study of Vocabulary Difficulties in Pre-primary Children's Literature." Unpublished Master's Thesis, Boston University, 1945.
- Hodgkins, Alma M. M., "The Tabulation of the Spontaneous Speaking Vocabulary of 162 Two to Five Year Old Children," Unpublished Master's Thesis, Boston University, 1947.
- Horn, Ernest, and Horn, Madeleine, and Parker, P. C., "The Commonest Words in the Spoken Vocabulary of Children up to and Including Six Years of Age," Twenty-fourth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part 1, Bloomington, Illinois: Public School Publishing Company, 1925, pp. 185-192.
- International Kindergarten Union Study Committee. A Study of the Vocabulary of Children Before Entering the First Grade, Washington: International Kindergarten Union, 1938, 36 pp.
- Kibbe, Delia E., "Enlarging and Enriching Meaning Vocabularies in Reading," Supplementary Education Monographs, Recent Trends in Reading, William S. Gray, editor, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1939, pp. 69-75.
- Langston, Roderick G., "A Core Vocabulary for Pre-primer Reading," Elementary School Journal, 41: 766-773, June, 1941.
- McKee, Paul, "Vocabulary Development," Thirty-sixth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part 1, Bloomington, Illinois: Public School Publishing Company, 1937, pp. 277-302.

1. The first part of the paper is devoted to a general discussion of the problem.

2. In the second part, we shall consider the case of a single particle.

3. The third part is devoted to the case of a system of particles.

4. In the fourth part, we shall discuss the case of a continuous medium.

5. The fifth part is devoted to the case of a system of continuous media.

6. In the sixth part, we shall consider the case of a single continuous medium.

7. The seventh part is devoted to the case of a system of continuous media.

8. In the eighth part, we shall discuss the case of a single continuous medium.

9. The ninth part is devoted to the case of a system of continuous media.

10. In the tenth part, we shall consider the case of a single continuous medium.

Sangren, Paul V., "Information Tests for Young Children,"
Childhood Education, 6: 70-75, October, 1929.

Storm, Grace E., "Developing Meaningful Concepts in Reading,"
Supplementary Education Monographs, Recent Trends in
Reading, William S. Gray, editor, Chicago: University
of Chicago Press, 1939, pp. 54-60.

Sullivan, Cecilia, "Informal Pre Reading Diagnostic Tests."
Unpublished Master's Thesis, Boston University, 1946.

Thompson, Helen I., "A Study of Vocabulary Necessary for
Reading in the First Grade." Unpublished Master's
Thesis, Boston University, 1945.

APPENDIX

SAMPLE RECORD

No. 22
C.A. 5-5

- | | |
|----------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. ball
bawl | "If you throw a ball you hit someone."
- |
| 2. be
bee | "B is for baby."
- |
| 3. bears
bares | "Goldilocks knocked at the bears' house."
- |
| 4. beat
beet | "You can beat someone at a game."
"Beets are red." |
| 5. bill | "Bills are checks." |
| 6. blew
blue | -
"Little Boy Blue come blow your horn." |
| 7. bowl | "You put food in it." |
| 8. buy
by | -
"The bus goes by my street." |
| 9. can | "Soup is in a can." |
| 10. cellar
seller | "You celebrate New Year's."
- |
| 11. corn | "You eat it." |
| 12. dear
deer | "Dear me! my mother says a lot."
"Eskimos boots are made from reindeer." |
| 13. duck | "They quack." |
| 14. fall | "You fall down big stairs some times."
"Fall comes after winter." |
| 15. feet
feat | "I have two feet."
- |
| 16. fine | "I feel fine." |

SAMPLE RECORD (Continued)

No. 22
C.A. 5-5

- | | |
|-----------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 17. flat | "The floor is flat." |
| 18. flour | "The flour bag has a picture of Paul Revere riding to tell the people the Russians are coming." |
| flower | "Flowers are red and yellow." |
| 19. fly | "We have a song about flying."
"Flies are bugs." |
| 20. here | - |
| hear | "You hear noises." |
| 21. know | - |
| no | "If your mother doesn't want you to do something, she says 'no'." |
| 22. may | "Please read us a book."
"May is the name of a month." |
| 23. new | "I have new shoes." |
| knew | - |
| 24. one | "One is a number." |
| won | "You say who won the ball game?" |
| 25. pair | - |
| pear | "You eat it." |
| pare | - |
| 26. read | - |
| red | "Flowers are red." |
| 27. saw | "You saw wood." |
| 28. see | - |
| sea | "My daddy went overseas during the war." |
| 29. stile | - |
| style | "A new style" |
| 30. tail | "Animals have tails." |
| tale | "Tales are little stories." |

SAMPLE RECORD (Continued)

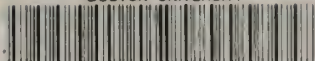
No. 22
C.A. 5-5

- | | |
|----------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 31. their
there | "The monkeys had caps on their heads."
"Way, way, down there." |
| 32. to
too
two | "We say we go to visit Grandma."
-
"One, two, three, four." |
| 33. way
weigh | -
"I got weighed in the nurse's room." |
| 34. we
wee | "We do something."
- |
| 35. well | "If you call down you can hear your echo." |
| 36. would
wood | "Would you, means will you please do it."
"You need wood for a fireplace." |

Date Due

JUL 30 1962	JUL 19 1966
JUL 18 1962	
OCT 6 1962	
OCT 27 1962	
MAR 25 1963	
MAR 18 1963	
AUG 10 1963	
<i>rm use</i>	
JUN 5 66	
MAR 12 1966	
Demco 293-5	

BOSTON UNIVERSITY



1 1719 02558 8866

Service Paper
Henessey, G.
1949

Henessey, Geraldine
The abalysis of some comprehensio
problems of kindergarten children

DATE	ISSUED TO
50 211	SEE
MAN LORRAINE	
045 692	
TWOKEY CHARLES	
205 824	
EPSTEIN NAN	

Ed.

Service
Paper
Henessey, G
1949

stored

